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Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 EB-08 OES-07 CIAE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 DODE-00 AID-05 /046 W
----------005328 030734Z /11
R 030650Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5304
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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TOKYO FOR REGIONAL FISHERIES ATTACHE

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EFIS, MASS, BM
SUBJ: INFORMAL GUB APPROACH RE AVAILABILITY OF USED PATROL BOATS FROM USG

SUMMARY: MANAGING DIRECTOR GUB PEARL AND FISHERIES CORP. INFORMALLY INQUIRED OF EMBASSY OFFICERS WHETHER USG HAS SURPLUS PATROL BOATS WITH OPEN SEA CAPABILITIES FOR SALE. HE SAID THE BOATS ARE NEEDED TO PREVENT POACHING BY FOREIGN FISHING VESSELS. EMBASSY REQUESTS THAT IF POSSIBLE THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINE WHETHER USG HAS SURPLUS PATROL BOATS AVAILABLE FOR SALE TO FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS, AND IF SO, WHAT PROCEDURES GUB SHOULD FOLLOW TO OBTAIN THEM. END SUMMARY

1. THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE GUB PEARL AND FISHERIES CORPORATION, U K. BA THAUNG, INFORMALLY APPROACHED EMBASSY OFFICERS REGARDING GUB DESIRE TO OBTAIN PATROL BOATS TO GUARD BURMA'S TERRITORIAL WATERS AND 200 MILE ECONOMIC ZONE FROM POACHING BY FOREIGN FISHING VESSELS. HE MAINTAINED THAT POACHING IN BURMA'S WATERS, PARTICULARLY BY THAI FISHERMEN, WAS CONTINUING AND THAT POACHERS WERE INCREASINGLY PRONE TO USE DYNAMITE IN THEIR FISHING EFFORTS.
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2. U K BA THAUNG ASKED IF BURMA COULD OBTAIN PATROL BOATS FROM THE U.S. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE U.S. NAVY HAD PATROL BOATS IN MOTHBALLS WHICH WOULD MEET BURMA'S REQUIREMENTS. HOWEVER, HE WAS RATHER VAGUE REGARDING THESE REQUIREMENTS OTHER THAN TO NOTE THE BOATS SHOULD BE LARGE ENOUGH FOR OPEN SEA OPERATIONS. HE MENTIONED "PGM" AND "PCE" CLASS

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VESSELS AND SAID THE GUB WOULD BE INTERESTED IN EIGHT TO TEN SUCH VESSELS. THE MANAGING DIRECTOR CLAIMED HE HAD THE BACKING OF PRESIDENT NE WIN TO PURSUE THE MATTER, AND IF THE BOATS WERE NOT AVAILABLE ON A GRANT OR SOFT CREDIT BASIS, THE GUB WOULD BE PREPARED TO PAY CASH FOR THEM.

3. EMBASSY OFFICERS RESPONDED THAT THE U.S. WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE IN A POSITION TO PROVIDE THE BOATS UNDER A GRANT OR TO PROVIDE SOFT-TERM CREDIT FOR THEIR PURCHASE. SECONDLY, THE EMBASSY HAD NO DIRECT KNOWLEDGE REGARDING SURPLUS PATROL BOATS WHICH THE USG MAY HAVE FOR SALE. IN ADDITION EMBASSY OFFICERS EXPRESSED THE BELIEF THAT THIS TRANSACTION WOULD PROBABLY BE TREATED AS A MILITARY SALE AND MIGHT BEST BE HANDLED BY THE GUB MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND THE BURMESE MILITARY ATTACHE IN WASHINGTON.

4. THE MANAGING DIRECTOR SAID THIS COULD BE BUREAUCRATICALLY CUMBERSOME FOR HIM, BUT HE WOULD BE WILLING TO FOLLOW THESE PROCEDURES IF NECESSARY AND IF HE COULD BE ASSURED THE USG HAD USED PATROL BOATS AVAILABLE FOR SALE. EMBASSY OFFICERS REPLIED THAT THE EMBASSYWOULD ATTEMPT TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER THE U.S. NAVY OR OTHERUSG AGENCY HAD SUCH BOATS FOR SALE, BUT MADE NO FURTHER OFFER OF ASSISTANCE.

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R 030650Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5305
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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5. DURING THE COURSE OF THE CONVERSATION THE MANAGING DIRECTOR SAID BURMA HAD APPROACHED AUSTRALIA FOR ASSISTANCE IN THIS MATTER. AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY OFFICER LATER SAID THAT AUSTRALIA HAD OFFERED GUB $10 MILLION LOAN AT GDW 1/2 PERCENT

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INTEREST TO PURCHASE PATROL BOATS. AUSTRALIA, HOWEVER, COULD BEST SUPPLY ONLY SMALL, 16 METER CRAFT. O AGREEMENT HAS YET BEEN REACHED, BUT THE AUSTRALIAN OFFICIAL SAID IT APPEARED LIKELY THE GUB WOULD ACCEPT THE OFFER.

6. LAST YEAR THE PEARL AND FISHING CORP. ISSUED A TENDER TO AUSTRALIA AND EEC COUNTRIES (NOT TO U.S.) FOR SUPPLY OF EIGHT TO TEN 16 METER AND EIGHT TO TEN 33 METER PATROL BOATS. APPARENTLY THE RESPONSE HAS NOT BEEN SATISFACTORY AND THE GUB IS STILL IN THE MARKET FOR THOSE CRAFT.

7. IN A RELATED TRANSACTION, THE BURMA NAVY RECENTLY PURCHASED SIX 32 FT. PATROL BOATS FROM UNIFLITE INC OF BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON. GUB OFFICIALS TOLD UNIFLITE REPRESENTATIVE THAT THE BURMA NAVY WOULD BE INTERESTED IN PURCHASING THREE 53 FT PATROL BOATS FROM THE FIRM AND AN ADDITIONAL PACKAGE OF SEVEN SUCH VESSELS WHICH COULD BE ASSEMBLED IN BURMA. THE BOATS WOULD BE USED TO PREVENT
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POACHING IN BURMA'S NEAR SHORE WATERS. HOWEVER, THESE VESSELS APPARENTLY WOULD NOT HAVE THE OPEN SEA CAPABILITY DESIRED BY THE PEARL AND FISHERIES CORPORATION.

8. ACTION REQUESTED: WE EXPECT TO BE APPROACHED AGAIN BY THE MANAGING DIRECTOR. WE REQUEST THAT IF POSSIBLE, THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINE WHETHER THE USG HAS USED PATROL BOATS AVAILABLE FOR SALE TO FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AND IF SO, WHAT PROCEDURES SHOULD BE FOLLOWED TO ACQUIRE THEM.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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